

Fish Smart Campaign

Educational campaign to raise people's awareness of the health risks from eating PCB-contaminated seafood from New Bedford Harbor.

Targeted Audience:

1. Women of Child-Bearing Age
2. Children
3. General Fishing Community

Superfund Records Center

SITE: New Bedford

BREAK: 14.1

OTHER: SDMS 292760

EPA, MA DEP, and MA DPH have partnered in this campaign and are actively engaging local partners, specifically:

1. Local Medical Providers
2. Social Service Providers
3. Marinas & Bait Shops
4. Schools

Outreach material was developed with the help of an informal focus group consisting of local medical and social service providers. Materials are in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Reaching Women of Child-Bearing Age and Young Children

Greater New Bedford Community Health Center and WIC offices are active partners who not only have Fish Smart Campaign posters in all waiting and examining rooms, but engage their patients in dialogue about nutritional habits and distribute language-appropriate Fish Smart Campaign flyers. Combined, both offices see approximately 2,000 women of child-bearing age and children monthly.

EPA and MA Dept. of Public Health held a medical Grand Round in Fall 2003 at the Greater New Bedford Community Health Center. A second Grand Round occurred in April 2004 at St. Luke's Hospital and offered attendees continuing medical credits. During the Grand Round, MA DPH's contracted physician presents medical and scientific information about the health risks associated with PCBs and EPA provides information on the harbor cleanup and the Fish Smart Campaign. Objectives of the Grand Rounds are to raise the awareness of the medical community regarding PCB health risks from consuming contaminated seafood and to engage them as active partners in disseminating information to the targeted audiences.

The New Bedford Health Dept. has posters and flyers which it makes available to its patients. The health department's phone number is listed on all Fish Smart Campaign materials.

The New Bedford Immigrants Assistance Center also has posters and flyers. EPA and DPH participated in the Assistance Center's health fair last summer.

The Peri-natal group, which is a coordinating group representing over ten different organizations in the Greater New Bedford area that address pre-natal care, teen pregnancy and welfare services, received a presentation. We will be seeking their active collaboration.



Reaching School-Age Children

EPA, MA DPH, and MA DEP, working with the Gomes Elementary School, which is close to the harbor and in a Cape Verdean neighborhood, and the Lloyd Environmental Center, provided two fifth grade classes with classroom and hands-on experiences pertaining to the New Bedford Harbor ecosystem, PCB cleanup activities, and seafood consumption health risks from harbor PCB-contaminated seafood. It is our desire to have another event next Fall and we would like to explore how to incorporate Fish Smart information into the curriculum.

Reaching Fishing Community

A multi-language trifold with a map of the harbor and its fishing ban information was mailed to nearly 4,000 households in New Bedford. Stacks of trifolds were given to Hands Across the River Coalition and Old Bedford Village Development Corp. representatives for distribution. Hands Across the River, EPA and MA DEP conducted a spring-time outreach effort to marinas and bait shops with the desired outcome of the marinas and shops hanging Fish Smart Campaign posters and making the Fish Smart multi-language trifold available to their customers. Will also run Fish Smart promotional material in the Standard Times Seaside Edition in collaboration with Hands Across the River.

Discussions are underway with the S.E. Transit Authority to outfit all of the buses and the New Bedford bus station with Fish Smart Campaign posters. EPA also intends on seeking permission to hang Fish Smart Campaign posters in all of the community centers, homeless centers, and public housing complexes.

This Campaign will continue to build as EPA further expands the number and type of local partners it is working with to raise awareness about the health risks of eating PCB-contaminated seafood from New Bedford Harbor.